SECTION 404(b)(1) EVALUATION
DREDGED MATERIAL

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

a. Location. Sarasota Bay is located on the west central coast of Florida between Tampa and Venice, Florida. The following is a location description of the proposed project disposal islands from the south to the north.

- Snake Island is the southernmost project disposal island located at Venice Inlet. Snake Island is approximately 2-acres in size and is owned by the West Coast Inland Navigation District.

- Palmer Point Park is a 33-acre disposal island owned by Sarasota County. Palmer Point Park is located in lower Sarasota Bay (Little Sarasota Bay) toward the north end of Casey Key. The project area is approximately 5 acres.

- Jim Neville Marine Preserve is a 35-acre preserve owned by Sarasota County and located directly north of Palmer Point park, toward the southern end of Siesta Key.

- Skier's Island is an 8-acre disposal island, which is owned by the West Coast Inland Navigation District, located in Robert's Bay. The Bird Colony Islands, covering approximately 2 acres, are located across the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) to the northeast of Skiers Island in Roberts Bay.

- Big Edwards Island is a 6-acre disposal island owned by Sarasota County. Big Edwards Island is located in Roberts Bay just south of Siesta Key.

b. General Description. The purpose of this project is to ecologically restore the degraded habitat in Sarasota Bay and Venice Inlet by removing exotic vegetation, excavating tidal channels, and planting native vegetation.

c. Authority and Purpose. Section 1135, 1986 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), as amended by the 1990 Water Resources Development Act is the authority for this project. The purpose of this project is to restore portions of the historical wetland habitat loss in Sarasota Bay and Venice Inlet due to the Corps of Engineers' placement of dredged fill material from the construction of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway during the 1950's and early 1960's.

d. General Description of Dredged or Fill Material.

- Big Edwards Island: Fine sands with a varying amount of shell and limestone rock pieces. The greatest amount of shell material is located on the southern portion of this island and the greatest amount of rocky material is on the northern end of the island. Some silty sands and sand silts are also located on the south end of the island.

- Skiers' Island: Fine sands with some shell or limestone pieces. Rocks approximately six inches in size are located on the ground surface throughout the island.

- Jim Neville Marine Preserve: The perimeter of the island consisted of fine sands to termination 1to 2 feet below the ground surface. The interior of the island consists of fine sand with a significant amount of large intact shell, shell fragments and limestone fragments to a depth of 5 to 7 feet below the ground surface.

- Palmer Point Park: Fine sands with a varying amount o shell fragments. The mudflat on the east end of the island consists of a silty peat from the ground surface to six inches below.

- Snake Island: Fine sands, some shell, shell fragments, and small pieces of phosphate. The middle of the island and the northwest quadrant consists of organic silt.

e. Description of the Proposed Discharge Site. To be determined.

f. Description of Disposal Method. Not yet determined.

II. Factual Determinations

a. Water Circulation and Fluctuation Determination. The long-term impacts are expected to be positive after the project is complete. There will be a temporary increase in turbidity levels around the perimeter of the island during the dredging and disposal operations. Shortly thereafter, the water is expected to clear up and remain so.

b. No impacts to color, odor, taste are expected.

c. Dissolved oxygen levels are expected to increase following project completion.

d. Expect changes in suspended particulate and turbidity levels in vicinity of disposal site. Slight increase during construction, no long-term effects.

e. Light penetration would be reduced during project implementation. This would be short-term in duration and would not cause any significant adverse effects.

f. There will be an increase in noise levels and aesthetic degradation from the presence and operation of dredge equipment at the project site(s). Aesthetics will improve considerably after construction.

g. No contaminants have been encountered and therefore none are anticipated in the dredging or disposal areas.